

EMBASSY OF THE UNITED STATES OF AMERICA

PUBLIC AFFAIRS SECTION

TEL: 880-2-883-7150-4

FAX: 880-2-9881677, 9885688

E-MAIL: DhakaPA@state.gov

WEBSITE: <http://dhaka.usembassy.gov>



PRESS RELEASE

USAID ADVOCATES COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT TO PROMOTE FAMILY PLANNING AND IMPROVE MATERNAL AND NEWBORN HEALTH

DHAKA, OCTOBER 20 -- The U.S. Agency for International Development (USAID), the U.S. Government's principal development agency, held a joint seminar today with the Government of Bangladesh (GOB) to promote community engagement and participation in improving maternal-newborn health and family planning. The seminar was organized by USAID's Integrated Safe Motherhood, Newborn Care, and Family Planning program which works among 3.5 million people in the Sylhet and Habiganj districts to promote healthy maternal and newborn healthcare practices at home and increase demand for maternal and newborn health services.

Community mobilization is considered one of the key components of USAID's MaMoni project. Earlier this year, MaMoni performed four different qualitative studies to review effective ways to engage and use the community to reduce maternal and child mortality in Bangladesh by raising community awareness and the capacity to use existing health services. The seminar was organized to share the findings from these studies done by MaMoni and other participating organizations.

Although Bangladesh is on track to achieve Millennium Development Goals 4 and 5 to reduce maternal and child mortality, there are certain regions where the mortality rates remain high. USAID, partnering with the GOB, is working in those regions to generate awareness and engage the community to ensure greater access and use of available healthcare services.

The U.S. Government, through USAID, has provided more than \$5.8 billion in assistance to Bangladesh since 1971. Established by President John F. Kennedy in 1962, USAID marks its 50th anniversary as an agency in 2012. Across the globe, USAID's 110 missions will be celebrating USAID's 50th anniversary throughout the year with in-country activities.

=====

GR/ 2011

Note: A Bangla translation of this press release is also available at the American Center. If you are interested in the translation, please call the American Center Press Section, Tel: 8837150-4, Fax: 9885688; e-mail: DhakaPA@state.gov; Website: <http://dhaka.usembassy.gov>